Journal 2 Instructions

**Due Date: Wednesday, 9/11/12**

Read Louis Menand, “The Graduates” p. 177 and Vartan Gregorian, “America, Still on Top” p. 180. Respond to **two questions for each reading** (four responses total). Be sure to label each question with the author’s last name and question number (i.e., Menand #2). Each answer should be at least a full paragraph in length. Be sure to explain your answers thoroughly in detail.

Be sure to answer all parts of the question in your response (but don’t list the different questions out and then answer them; just answer them in prose format).

The Graduates:

1. Menand states that American colleges operate on a meritocratic system; then, he goes on to state that, “Children from higher-income families enjoy an advantage in competing for the top spots.” Write in response to these two ideas first by explaining each. Do they work together or are they in opposition to one another? What are your experiences or observations with these two concepts? Describe your feelings about this and your reaction.
2. In paragraph 8, Menand poses the question, “What do we want from college, though?” Write an answer to this. As a society, what do we expect people to gain from a college degree? How do individuals and society benefit from college education? What is the purpose of sending our youth to higher education after finishing high school?
3. Menand includes several statistics about American higher education. Write down two of the statistics and include an interpretation and a prediction for each. In other words, what does the statistic tell us about American higher education and what do you predict will result from this information?

America, Still on Top:

1. Discuss the meaning of the title of this article. What is Gregorian’s central message in this article? Include at least two quotes (no longer than a sentence each in length) from the text that demonstrate the author’s main idea. **(When you include a quote, be sure to introduce the quote with a phrase like, *Gregorian says, “…”* After inserting the quote, be sure to explain it in your own words.)**  How does the author conclude the article, and how does that fit with the title?
2. In your own words, summarize the comparison of the establishment of higher education in the U.S. with the establishment of higher education in other parts of the world. Why does Gregorian provide this contrast? What is he attempting to demonstrate?
3. In the last two sentences of paragraph 6, Gregorian provides statistics about the production of math, science and engineering students in the U.S. higher education system. Explain and interpret this information. What does it mean for us and how should we as a nation respond to these figures?